HOGARTH HOUSE
PARADISE ROAD
RICHMOND
SURREY
Telephone : Richmond 496

Sunday, July 8th

My dear Barbara,

I hope this sun is not adding to your torments. But now they will soon be over; & your sympathies enlarged, which is very nice for your friends, so as Nessa would say it's an ill wind that fills the milk. Perhaps you did'nt know how fond she is of proverbs; but not being at a literary turn, she often tacks one on to another— nor that it matters much. If I were you I should write to Ka Arnold Forster, Eagles Nest, Zennor, St Ives, Cornwall for lodgings. She found us some very good ones with a Miss Hosken (I think) at Zennor: but Ka would know. I would have a mild attack of the fever in order to go to Cornwall for 2 weeks. One can't ever go away with out some such reason. I assure you the press is worse than 6 children at the best simultaneously. Consider the sow. She shows no embarrassment. But Leonard & I live apart — he in the basement, I in the printing room. We meet only at meals, often so cross that we can't speak, & generally dirty. His friendships always coincide with my disasters. When ones up, the other's down. Then you & the sow say that maternity is worse! I have just finished setting up the whole of Mr Eliot's poem with my own hands. You see how

my hand trembles. Don't blame your eyes. It's my writing. Roger is back, but has not swum into my life yet: though swimming scarcely expresses his descent – it's more like having an aeroplane on the roof. Pamela has wanted both to have a baby & to make coloured papers. She intends to sell the coloured papers to the pays, & so to support the Baby. If the Baby dies, it will be all our fault. Diamond, as the husband is called, can't even cut his initials on a frame of glass. Roger says he's completely idle – but that may mean only that he stays in bed till 8.30. Roger says. likes to begin sightseeing at dawn, & used to pinch hour Vera Duncan awake every morning at 4. The consequence was that when can often fell asleep standing, like a horse, before the pictures in the Prado. This made Roger enquire still. But Saxon visited him gladly. I went to Tristan the other night; but the love making bored me. When I was your age I thought it the most beautiful thing in the world – or was at any rate in deference to Saxon? I told many lies in Covent Garden Opera house. My youth was largely spent there. And we used to write the names of operas in books. But I must not write the whole history of my life. I must finish Leonard and the basement – think what happened this afternoon! A mouse fell into the servants W.C. Lottie came rushing to Leonard. What was to be done? Like a man of action, without saying a word, he pulled the plug. Had it been a rat, the Consequences might have been fatal. The drains would have been stopped. I say: Leonard says not. He says – but this two disgusting. You can (in a sense what Leonard said, as we were having tea.

Let me know how you are. & forgive this dreadful scribble. Love to Nick. Ever V.W.

Please forward.

Mrs N. Bagenal

~~c/o J. Sydney Turner Esq.~~

~~3, Great Ormond Street~~

~~London W.C.1~~

Sunny Cottage
Bosbury Common
Hereford

I am ashamed to send this letter which got stuck in a book, & has thus lost any interest it may have had. But now I can wish you a happy new year.

Monks House
Rodmell
Lewes.

Dec. ~~30th~~ 31st
Jan. 3rd 1922

My dear Barbara,

I have just stuck your photograph in my book. Many thanks for sending it. Your son is exactly like his father. But one always annoys people by finding likenesses, so I will say no more. I would send you a photograph in exchange — but mine all got the foggy day this summer. I don't know how yours are so good — there is Saxon to the life —

We are just returning to Richmond; where we shall immediately be engrossed in printing. Roger's woodcuts have gone into 3 editions; — I like to rub this in, to show you how bad a bargain you made when you deserted us for marriage & the hills of Wales & the waters of the Wye. I don't know what news to send you — for why should you be excited by the immense excitements of this village? Mr. Thanks has

NYPL

pneumonia; the Squeeze is selling all his land; we hope to buy a field, in which case Leonard will have the finest potatoes in the kingdom. You must come & see our new garden room.

Logan has completely vanished from my life. He broke our telephone early in the autumn, which he took amiss, & refuses to ring us up, or pretends that we don't answer if he does. However, when he came in person he seemed younger, stronger, straighter than ever, after travelling to the heart of Finland, & finding no one to receive him. Nessa is in equal uncertain what to do – whether to plant the children at Gordon Square & stay on with Duncan in France; or to face family life in London. She remains more than ever contemptuous of England – What a bore it must be to be a painter, & need light & landscape, instead ga fire & a book!

I never thanked you for the wonderful cauliflowers you kept the Queen in. She came back considerably more purple & spruce than she went out.

Are you making a fortune? Could you do a coup in apple trees – or discover a caustic? – something to make apples grow in December? I say caustic because L. is spraying our trees all day long with it.

Love to Nick & your family.

Yours ever V. W.

Mr. Bagenal,
C/o Mr. Edwards,
Ty Mawr,
Solva
Haverford West
Pem:

Athcham
Rodmell
Lewes.

20th Sept.

Dear Barbara,

We can't thank you at all adequately for your pat of butter. Butter is far the most precious thing in the world here, because the Coop's can only give us 2 ozs. a week which merely greases the top of one's toast at breakfast, & leaves one to dry bread at tea. Now we look forward to 1 good tea; at each one you & Nick shall be blessed by name. But how on earth do you manage to spare it? It seems to me the height of generosity.

I had never neared the Hardy, I confess, but I am very glad to have it back again. It is infinite ages since we met — the last time is connected in my mind chiefly, but not entirely, with your very

handsome brindled cat. I feel that your hovere will always be comfortable & distinguished with such a cat. But when is your hovea going to be, & is it true that Nick is becoming a farmer? Walk. I can't suppose any woman in Hampstead has lived through so many things in a year as you have. Printing at Hogarth must be like something seen through opera glasses upside down. I am so domestic as to think that nothing can be quite so important as child bearing, & I'm so sure that I don't think I shall speak to you; & yet they tell me you pretend to despise it all with a shrug. & the brat is to be worked after by a committee of matrons.

I have been entirely sunk in the pitchy & indeed stinking water of domestic strife — in which by the way you are remotely concerned. After tupperming for a long time I tried Lottie the next clean out jug & basin. This, as I expected, produced first a torrent of abuse; then she gave notice; then she accused me of lending my hoove to strangers, who left it very dirty, & gave her a bad name with the cottagers, & used up all the coal. This refers to Mrs Mason of course. Do you

think there's any truth in it? — I dont for a moment suppose that the left the house dirtier than we found it, but I wonder if the complained to Mrs. Attfield, & also whether there was some mystery about the coal. Dottie now, as usual, wants to stay on; but we are assured that our coal has been stolen. Can you remember if there was much when you came, & any left when you went? It really doesn't matter, as we cant do anything more than buy a new padlock, which we have already done; & leaving the house as we do, one must expect a good deal of dirt & some stealing I suppose.

Charleston is full of Clive & Mary & Mrs. B. come back, & the children home again. Clive & Mary should be here at this moment, but Mary took ill, as they say; & as we're only a charwoman, & Mary can't help being a lady, I'm a little relieved. We've been having the Sidney Webbs, a timorous Gentler comes, & then, thank God, absolute silence & sloth for 10 days. But shall you be in London on the 7th October? Are you going to take to vegetables too? I'll try to write to Saxon, but I feel unable to conceive him in a Homburg hat, on the Parade or on the Wall before breakfast. We're sending you some mushrooms that we picked in the hollow this afternoon in thanksgiving for the butter. Yrs. V. W.

NYPL

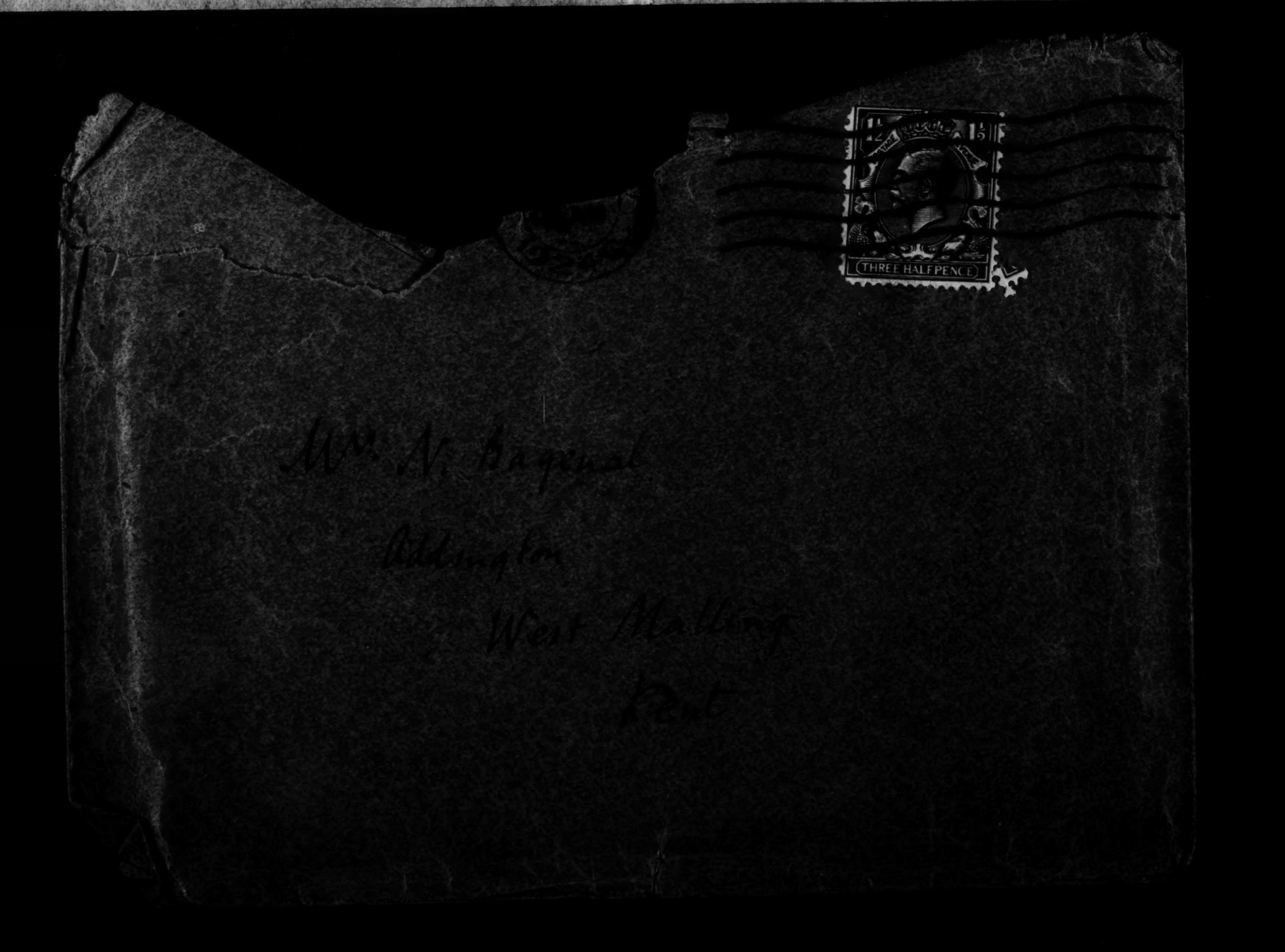
52 Tavistock Square, London. W. C.

25th July, 1924.

My dear Barbara,

I am desolated to hear of your disease, and write, if only by typewriter, to express my sympathy, and add my curse. For why should the limbs of a nit be tortured? Is it rheumatism? Is it mere distatse (I can't spell, or keep to grammar, but my hand is so tired with handwriting that I must use this) for life?

I have been to a funeral service myself, and every one seems in a falling way, mildewed, cankered, and slightly corrupt. This always cheers one in bed--to think on the vices and diseases of others. Our Mrs Joad, God damn her, has been away with pneumonia these four weeks, and will take another six before she is back; with the result that we all run about the basement, distracted, henlike, with wisps of string, labels, brown paper, now answering the door--Please come in. Yes I'm the advertising manager. Yes we give you 33½ % on numbers over tweleve--No; we dont keep Songs of Sunrise (they come to us all day long, the wrtechedbagmen, to ask for books we dont sell) and so on and so on. The Press has suddenly become monstrous, kicking and sprawling. We have a drawer full of manuscripts which the authors deposit and the seediest old bankrupts arrive who won't go away till Leonard, whose heart is of gold, gives them five pounds, which they all lavish on drink, but, as he says, we shall come to it one of these days. I dwell on these glories to make you regret your marriage. The news of Bloomsbury reaches you quicker than it does me, I'm


THREE HALFPENCE
Mrs. N. Bagenal
Addington
West Malling
Kent

sure. You heard rumours no doubt of Maynards great party; and Duncans ballet, and how not a coarse word was said, or indeed thought, by some people. It is coarseness that is the downfall of Bloomsbury. Dora Sanger left our last affair in dudgeon; and was heard to say that she hadn't felt so ravaged since Charlie-- .... but Charlie has spread the rumour, which has reached Malling long via ~~ahp~~ , that Dora's dudgeon wa the result of drink. That explains much in Dora's conduct. I found myself looking at Saxon, at this same party, and saying That very distinguished man was once my friend. He has taken on a diplomatic refined twisted up and fastidious air which delights my heart; estranged though we be. It's all the roof in the best bedroom at Hogarth, which falls and falls and covers all with gravel, so they say. Then the beetles have been very tactless; and Saxon says (but what a faery way he has with him--such things never happened to me) Saxon says a lark has nested in the kitchen boiler; naturally this upsets the cook. The lark soars to the ceiling and rains out its song as she comes down in the morning. I see a great many people off and on; but only hear this sort of gossip--Lytton is moving, Ralph flirts, Carrington is happy today, very unhappy tomorrow; Gerald teaches Lady Colefax's son Spanish; Leonard has been put on a Government commission; Nessa never enjoyed any party so much as Kate Stephens funeral; we are all off to Sussex on Wednesday, which I have never wanted so much , since London makes one dry, brittle, febrile, and the country makes ones dsodden, rheumatic, and affectionate. Please write again, and I will stick spurs to my typewriter; and get well, and come on your car to Rodmell with a melon.

Yr. V.W.